

READ OF THE STARK HORROR
TWO MEN FOUND IN A GAME OF

CUTTING CARDS!



FRED FENNER



THIS STORY IS PROBABLY THE MOST HORRIBLE, BLOOD-GURDLING TALE YOU WILL EVER READ! IT CONCERNS TWO PROFESSIONAL GAMBLERS... GUS FORNEY AND LOU GREBIS! GAMBLERS... BIG-TIME GAMBLERS LIKE GUS AND LOU... ARE IN A CLASS BY THEMSELVES! GAMBLING IS THEIR LIFE! THE WAGER... THE BET... IS THEIR BLOOD! BUT GUS FORNEY AND LOU GREBIS HATED EACH OTHER... HATED EACH OTHER LIKE POISON...

THERE ISN'T ENOUGH ROOM IN THIS TOWN FOR BOTH OF US, LOU!

I'M NOT LEAVING, GUS! SO, GOOD-BYE... GET ON YOUR HORSE...



I MEAN THERE ISN'T ENOUGH ROOM IN THIS WHOLE WORLD FOR BOTH OF US, LOU! AND I'M WILLIN' TO GAMBLE TO SEE WHO LEAVES IT!

YOU'RE BLUFFING, GUS! OKAY! YOU'RE ON! SHALL WE DRAW? HIGH CARD WINS! THE LOSER DIES! THE CHOICE OF METHOD IS HIS!



IT'S A
BET!

HERE'S THE
DECK! SHUFFLE
'EM UP!



GUS SHUFFLED THE CARDS AND
SPREAD THEM OUT, FACE DOWN,
ON THE TABLE...

GO AHEAD!
PICK!

OKAY! I'LL
PICK...ER...



LOU FINGERED THE FACE DOWN
CARDS, RUNNING THROUGH THEM!
THEN... HE SPUN ONE OVER...

ACE! TOO
BAD, GUS!

WAIT A MINUTE!
I STILL DRAW!
THERE ARE THREE
AGES LEFT IN THAT
DECK!



GUS STARED DOWN AT THE CARDS FANNED OUT BEFORE HIM! THE ODDS WERE SIXTEEN TO ONE AGAINST HIS PICKING ONE OF THE THREE REMAINING ACES! HE SPUN A CARD OVER...

WHY, YOU *LUCKY*
@ # X!! ? &!!

HEH, HEH! *ACE, LOU!*
SHALL WE DRAW AGAIN?



NO! I GOT A *SIMPLER*
METHOD! GET YOUR
REVOLVER! I *CHALLENGE*
YOU TO A
GAME OF *RUSSIAN*
ROULETTE!

OKAY, LOU!
YOU'RE *ON...*



GUS TOOK HIS REVOLVER FROM THE DRAWER AND REMOVED ALL BUT ONE BULLET FROM ITS SIX CHAMBERS...

WE GO IN SEQUENCE... ALTERNATING! I'LL GO FIRST!

OKAY WITH ME, GUS! I'LL SPIN THE CHAMBER!



LOU TOOK THE SIX-SHOT REVOLVER AND TWIRLED THE CHAMBER...

THERE! SHE'S STOPPED SPINNING! NOW REMEMBER! ONE AFTER THE OTHER... TILL SHE GOES OFF!

RIGHT! GIVE IT TO ME...



GUS TOOK THE REVOLVER! HE LIFTED THE BARREL TO HIS TEMPLE! THE ODDS WERE FIVE TO ONE...



CLICK!



GUS HANDED THE GUN TO LOU! LOU PLACED THE MUZZLE AGAINST HIS HEAD! ODDS NOW... *FOUR TO ONE...*



GUS TOOK THE GUN! BEADS OF PERSPIRATION BEGAN TO POP OUT ON THE TWO GAMBLERS' FACES! GUS POINTED THE REVOLVER! ODDS... *THREE TO ONE...*



CLICK!



LOU TOOK THE GUN! THERE WERE
THREE SHOTS LEFT NOW!
ONE OF THEM HAD THAT *BULLET!*
ODDS... *TWO TO ONE...*



LOU SIGHED IN RELIEF AND MOPPED HIS BROW! GUS'S HAND SHOOK A LITTLE AS HE RAISED THE GUN! HE HESITATED! IT WAS EVEN MONEY, NOW! HIS FINGER TWITCHED... THEN CLOSED...



GUS GRINNED! LOU STARED AT THE GUN! THE ODDS HAD RUN OUT! THE BULLET WAS LEFT! GUS HANDED THE WEAPON OVER...

HEH, HEH!
TOO BAD, LOU!

CHOKE!



LOU LIFTED THE GUN AND STEELED HIMSELF FOR THE DEATH BLOW AS THE BULLET CAME CRASHING INTO HIS BRAIN! HE SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER...

CLUNK!



WHAT?
IT... IT
DIDN'T GO
OFF!

A... A DUD! WHY, YOU DIRTY C#@#!X?
YOU KNEW IT ALL THE TIME! THAT'S
WHY YOU WANTED TO GO FIRST! YOU
THOUGHT I'D CRAWL...



DON'T BE AN
IDIOT, LOU! YOU
TWIRLED THE
CHAMBER!
HOW DID I
KNOW IT
WOULD COME
UP LAST?

YOU CAN'T TALK
YOUR WAY OUT OF
THIS ONE, GUS!
NO MATTER WHEN
IT CAME UP, YOU
HAD A SURE
THING!



ARE YOU ACCUSING
ME... GUS FORNEY,
OF CHEATING?

YOU CAN
HEAR! LUCKY
I'M AN
HONEST
GAMBLER OR I'D
NEVER HAVE FOUND
OUT! BUT I NEVER
WELSH WHEN I
LOSE!



OKAY, GREBIS! IF YOU'RE
SUCH A BIG-SHOT
GAMBLER... THEN
YOU'LL ACCEPT MY
CHALLENGE!

YOU JUST
NAME
IT!



NOBODY CALLS BUS FORNEY A
CHEAT! GREBIS... I CHALLENGE
YOU TO A GAME OF
CHOP-POKER!

OKAY, YOU
GRUM! YOU'RE
ON!



**TO A
FINISH!**

**TO A FINISH!
CALL YOUR DOCTOR!
I'LL GET MINE!**



THEN, FIENDS, BEGAN THE MOST HORRIBLE CARD GAME IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN GAMBLING! YOU'VE HEARD OF STRIP POKER? WELL, CHOP POKER IS ALMOST LIKE THAT! ONLY INSTEAD OF LOSING AN ARTICLE OF CLOTHING ... YOU LOSE A LIMB! CHOP POKER HAD BEEN PLAYED BEFORE... IT WAS TOLD... BUT ONLY ONE HAND AT A TIME! NEVER... TO A FINISH!



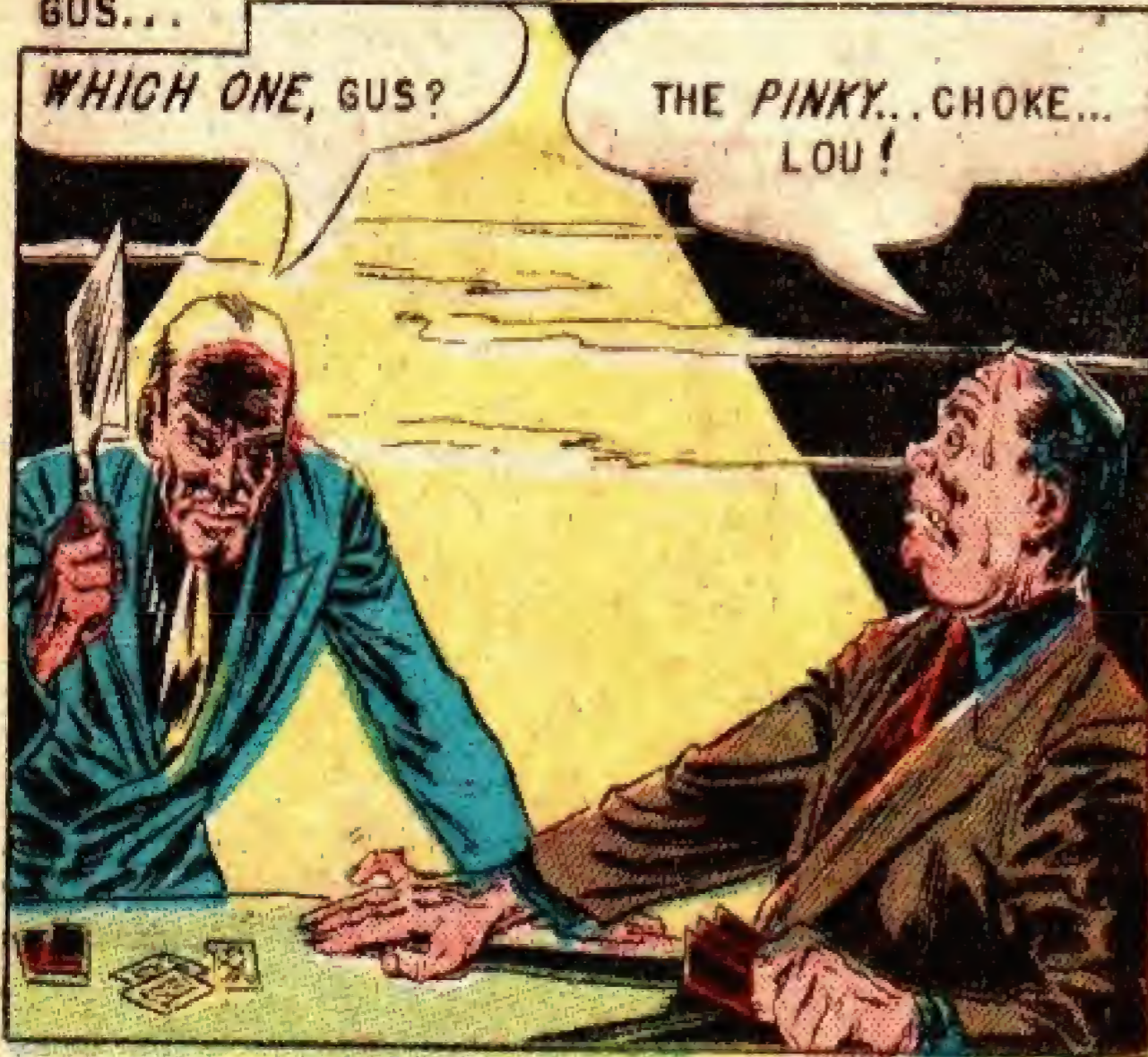
THEY SAT AT THE GREEN FELT-COVERED TABLE BENEATH THE GLARING LAMP! THE MEAT CLEAVER SPARKLED BETWEEN THEM! GUS DEALT THE CARDS...



LOU PICKED UP THE CLEAVER AND STOOD OVER GUS...

WHICH ONE, GUS?

THE PINKY... CHOKE...
LOU!



GUS STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND! HIS PERSONAL DOCTOR MOVED FORWARD INTO THE LIGHT! LOU RAISED THE CLEAVER AND BROUGHT IT DOWN...



AAAAARRRRGHHH!

ZOK!

IT WAS LIKE A FIENDISH DUEL! THE DOCTORS WERE THE SECONDS! TIME WAS TAKEN OUT WHILE GUS'S SECOND SERVICED HIM! THE BANDAGE WAS BLOTCHED RED WHEN THEY BEGAN AGAIN...

YOUR DEAL, LOU!

CUT!



LOU DEALT THE CARDS! THEY DISCARDED... THEN...

I GOT *TWO PAIR*, GUS... *KING'S AND SIXES!*

MY GAME, LOU! *THREE FOURS!*



GUS PICKED UP THE GLEAVER IN HIS GOOD HAND!
LOU'S SECOND MOVED INTO THE LAMPLIGHT...

WHICH ONE, LOU?

THE...THE
PINKY...GUS!



LOU STRETCHED OUT HIS LEFT HAND! GUS TOOK
GAREFUL AIM...

UUUUNNGHHH!



AGAIN TIME WAS TAKEN OUT WHILE LOU'S SECOND SERVICED HIM! SOON, THE CARDS WERE SHUFFLED ONCE MORE...



HEH, HEH! YEP, KIDDIES! THAT'S HOW THE GAME WAS PLAYED! IT CONTINUED ON LIKE THAT... FAR INTO THE NIGHT! AS EACH HAND WAS PLAYED AND WON...



BUT LOU AND GUS NEVER DID PLAY CHOP FOKER TO A FINISH! OH, YES! THEY PLAYED ALL NIGHT AND INTO THE NEXT DAY! BUT THEY HAD TO QUIT TOWARDS EVENING! SEEMS THAT NEITHER OF THEM COULD DEAL THE CARDS!



WHAT? YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME? WELL, LET'S LOOK IN ON THIS HOSPITAL ROOM! LOU AND GUS ARE IN THERE... STILL GAMBLING...



GO AHEAD! IT'S YOUR MOVE!

SO PASS THE CHEWING GUM! I WANT TO JUMP YOU!

THE
END